

***REV. LEONARD A. ABERCROMBIE***

**DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES 2013  
PURSUANT TO JCCP 4286 SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

**Vicar for Clergy Database**

Clergy Assignment Record (Detailed)

**Rev Leonard A. Abercrombie***Current Primary Assignment**Birth Date* 1/1/1901*Age:**Birth Place**Deanery:**Diaconate Ordination**Priesthood Ordination* 6/1/1946*Diocese Name* Archdiocese of Denver*Date of Incardination**Religious Community**Ritual Ascription* Latin*Ministry Status* Deceased*Canon State* Extern Priest*Incard Process* ☐*Begin Pension Date**Seminary**Ethnicity* English**Fingerprint Verification and Safeguard Training***Date Background Check**Virtus Training Date***Assignment History**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Beginning Date</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Deceased	10/24/1994	
Veterans Administration Medical Center, Los Angeles Associate Pastor (Parochial Vicar), Active Service	1/1/1993	10/23/1994
Veterans Administration Medical Center, Los Angeles Chaplain, Active Service	10/13/1974	12/31/1992



C-File  
Leonard Abercrombie

Archdiocese of Los Angeles

Office of  
Vicar for Clergy  
(213) 251-3284

1531  
West Ninth  
Street

Los Angeles  
California  
90015-1194

April 25, 1994

REDACTED

Archdiocese of Denver  
200 Josephine Street  
Denver, Colorado 80206

Dear REDACTED

I write in response to your letter of April 8, 1994 regarding Rev. Leonard Abercrombie.

First of all, we were not notified of Father Abercrombie's retirement and our records are still showing him as active as a Chaplain at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Sepulveda, California.

Second, we need his address if he is going to live here. He cannot minister without faculties of this Archdiocese and if there is sexual abuse in his background we cannot issue those to him. Thus we would like to get in contact with him to let him know that.

We must also tell him that the faculties he held in consideration of his ministerial assignment here expired at the time of his retirement.

I very much appreciate your frankness in writing us and note your mention that due to his health he is not functioning as a priest at this time. Nevertheless, we are concerned that our records as to his location be accurate and that he be informed of his status as regards the faculties of this Archdiocese.

With gratitude for your assistance and wishing you God's blessings, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(Rev. Msgr.) Timothy J. Dyer  
Vicar for Clergy

REDACTED

Pope John Paul II  
The Holy See  
Vatican City  
Rome, Italy

Dear Pope:

In July of 1993, I wrote a letter to you telling you that I was molested as a child by one of your priests, the Reverend Leonard Abercrombie. Ten years ago he was a priest in Los Angeles, California, so I sent a copy to Cardinal Mahony. The letter informed you the first time it happened I was 7 years old, a camper at Camp St. Malo, near Estes Park, Colorado, and Abercrombie was the chaplain. Since that location was in the Denver diocese I copied then Archbishop (now Cardinal) Stafford. I also sent a copy to the Colorado Springs bishop, Richard Hanifen. I informed each of you that the Denver diocese of the Roman Catholic Church had covered up Abercrombie's predation of children making it possible for him to molest me and others that I knew of when I wrote to you.

Since then more have come forward, all of us a result of the former Denver archbishop moving Abercrombie about like an undeliverable letter— to places like Camp St. Malo (where you visited in 1993), Hugo, Roggen, Grand Lake, Deer Trail, Limon, all small Colorado towns where the predator was made pastor. My letter informed you that the papal Nuncio, in Washington DC, in January 1961, knew of this and participated in the cover ups. I informed each of you that this horror was systemic in your church, and to you, dear pope, I wrote, "Your bishops have known about it and have been covering it up as a matter of course. Apparently, they haven't informed you of their criminal complicity." So I did.

In the ten years that have passed I never heard a word of apology from any of you with the exception of our long time family friend, Bishop Richard Hanifen of Colorado Springs: You ignored me, Cardinal Mahony ignored me, Cardinal Stafford ignored me, and Abercrombie kept silent.

Bishop Hanifen went on local television and said "I am sure the Holy Father will respond to your letter." Well, you have not.

Ten years ago I wrote that your American church had paid out over half a billion dollars to victims to keep them quiet and that this was another scandal in itself. I wrote that your bishops had protected your church with a pattern "of criminal behavior in mollifying scandal at the expense of its children." I asked you to do something about it. I gave the letter to the press hoping they would do something about it. The press ignored these assertions and only reported that a prominent lawyer was molested by a priest when he was a child and that no denial was forthcoming from your church. It ignored the allegations I made about how widespread the scandal and how many bishops and priests were involved. Now the truth is finally becoming apparent and your church has stopped paying "hush money" at least in the United States. Now it is paying openly, and is saddled with billions more in exposure. Police departments are no longer partners with your bishops in the cover-up as so many did for so long.

When my grandparents were alive, Pius IX was on your throne. He was the first pope to claim he was infallible. He also condemned what he called errors of the modern world. His list included the idea that state should be separated from church, and claimed that his church, which happens to be your church, was above all governments; that freedom of speech was a blunder; he condemned freedom of the press, and the rights of the People to think for themselves. He basically condemned what America was founded upon. I don't recall the repeal of any of these papal policies, and it is no wonder your bishops consider themselves above the law.

I take pride in the fact that Americans Catholics, for the most part, ignore your church's notions

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about our country's "errors" in recognizing our rights, as human beings, to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and separation of state from any and all churches, including yours. Indeed, some of the loudest cries against the pope in my grandparents' day came from Catholics in the pews. Your hegemony is shrinking. Ten years ago the press ignored my accusations that priestly pedophilia was widespread and that bishops were the chief enablers of perverts. It just seemed too shocking to report it. Now it is accepted as fact by thinking people, and the loudest protest of your bishops' policy of cover-up has come from the American Catholic Church. I am filled with gratitude to them, to every one of the majority of American Catholics, those who do not wallow in servility to hierarchy and hegemony. I wish them every good thought.

I spoke out because I knew what was happening and wanted it stopped. I spoke out hoping you would apologize and it would help all of us. Many called me "mean-spirited" and a "Catholic basher" and a few called me a liar. I started talking about it on my radio program called "Murphy's Law" and tried to spread the news that the mainstream press ignored. I built up a small library investigating the claims of your church and others, and shared my knowledge as best I could on the air. I wrote articles, gave talks, debated and pleaded. It all helped me but sometimes I wonder if it made any difference at all.

My first and only contact with Colorado Springs' new bishop, Most Reverend Michael J. Sheridan, was a request for money for seminarians! The gall it must take to act like that is beyond my comprehension. I want to leave your church but your church will not let me—unless you open the door. Ten years ago I wrote, "I don't want your money, I want your ear." I did not get it, and due to your hegemony I didn't get the ear of the press either. So now I have done my part and I want to be shut of the matter but there is just one more item. Would you grant a request?

I am not asking for the impossible. The Jesuits taught me that even with all your power you cannot un-baptize me or anyone else, just like the omnipotent Trinity can't get someone out of Hell once they are there. OK, that's the rule and we both have to follow it, but at least you could excommunicate me. That, you could do. Will you please do it for me? I mean if you and your Cardinals will not apologize, at least you could throw me out for my lack of humility in asking for one. If you need more evidence as to why I am eligible for excommunication I will supply it, or perhaps, you could check with your Protestant counterpart, REDACTED REDACTED or simply have one of your functionaries put my full name, REDACTED in quotes, in any Internet search engine. Once there you will find that if anyone deserves to be excommunicated it is I. If you won't apologize at least sever the bind you have on me, and allow me the honor of excommunication.

Sincerely,

REDACTED

July 18, 2003

Copy to: J. Francis Cardinal Stafford, Vatican City  
Rodger Cardinal Mahony, Los Angeles, CA  
Most Reverend Richard Hanifen, Colorado Springs, CO  
The Gazette, Colorado Springs, CO

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- C file

MEMORANDUM  
REDACTED

RECEIVED JUL 19 1993

DATE: July 16, 1993  
TO: Cardinal Roger Mahony  
FROM: REDACTED  
RE: Report of Clerical Abuse Charge

This morning I received a telephone call from a reporter for the Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegram who informed me . . .

- + A lawyer in her home town had written a letter to the Vatican (with a copy to you) on July 9 charging that a priest, Father Leonard Abercombrie, had sexually molested him when he was a boy. The priest, she told me, now lives in Mission Hills.
- + Our directory lists him as a chaplain at the Veterans Hospital in Sepulveda. I was not able to find any other information about him either in our files or Tidings files.
- + The Kenedy directory lists him as "retired" from the Denver Archdiocese, ordained in 1946.
- + I gave the information to the reporter and referred her to the Military Archdiocese for additional information after informing her he was under that jurisdiction.

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cc: REDACTED

Msgr. Dyer  
REDACTED

REDACTED

memo to REDACTED regarding inappropriateness  
of sending anything like this to anyone but Vicar for Clergy and  
past sealed + Confidential as filed in REDACTED Correspondence in REDACTED  
administrative files.

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ARCHDIOCESE OF  
CATHOLIC PASTORAL

8 April 1994

Rev. Timothy J. Dyer  
Vicar for Clergy  
1531 W. Ninth Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90015-1194

RE: Leonard Abercrombie

Dear Father Dyer:

As you may know Reverend Leonard Abercrombie, a priest incardinated in the Archdiocese of Denver, has been residing in Los Angeles for the past twenty-two years. It is my understanding that Father Abercrombie retired due to ill health, approximately two years ago.

I wish to inform you that Archbishop Stafford has recently withdrawn the priestly faculties from Father Abercrombie based upon allegations of sexual abuse which occurred over twenty year ago. Father Abercrombie denied the charges. There has been no legal action initiated in Denver arising out of these allegations and, quite frankly, none are expected.

Nonetheless, in the spirit of providing full disclosure to you, I felt it was appropriate to bring these developments to your attention.

It is my understanding that based upon Father Abercrombie's fraile health, Father Abercrombie not functioning in any way as a priest.

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your brother in Christ,

REDACTED

*TD*  
*We were not notified by mil. services that he was leaving the V.A. assignment here. Still residing in L.A. ! Permanent faculties as of 1974*  
*We need to find out where he is - ? See notebook for letter*  
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JET  
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